

Full Length Research Paper

Examination of attitudes to learning and educational stress in prospective primary school teachers: İzmir-Buca sample

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Received 14 November, 2017; Accepted 11 January, 2018

Many factors interact with each other in learning and internalizing a subject along with performing a new task. Attitudes and stress are the two of these factors. The aim of this study was to examine attitudes to learning and educational stress in third and fourth year students as prospective primary school teachers. The relational model was used and data were collected with Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents and Scale for Attitudes to Learning. The population of the study includes the students in the Education Faculty of a university where the researcher worked and a total of 189 third-year and fourth-year students formed the study sample. While the students' attitudes to learning differed in terms of subscales of educational stress, they either mostly agreed or were indecisive about their attitudes and stress. They also got low scores for educational stress; and a significant difference in attitudes to learning and expectations from learning in favor of the female students was observed. Similarly, the female students got higher scores for pressure from study, self-expectation and educational stress in general. No significant difference was found between the third-year and the fourth-year students in terms of their attitudes to learning, but the fourth-year students had a higher self-expectation. The sections of the students did not create a difference. There were relations between subscales of the scales. In view of these results, it can be suggested that educational stress can be reduced by using appropriate interventions designed to decrease worries about grades and workload and to support expectations of students.

Key words: Prospective primary school teacher, attitudes to learning and educational stress.

INTRODUCTION

The factors affecting individuals during the education and teaching processes are teachers, learning environment, teaching methods and techniques, learning strategies, background information, interactions with family and social milieu, attitudes, motivation, anxiety, self-efficacy, self-respect, self-concern and educational stress.

Learning and internalizing a subject and performing a new task can be achieved by interplay of abovementioned and more factors. Although learning and internalizing a subject (Özden, 1997: 24) along with accomplishment of what has not been achieved before (Kara, 2010) can have various definitions such as

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relatively permanent changes (Senemoğlu, 2005: 88) in a repertory of behavior (Cangöz, 2012: 10), their outcomes can be observed in their effects on individuals' lives. According to Smith and Ragan (1999), who divided factors effective in learning into cognitive, affective, social and physiological categories, attitudes, anxiety and self-efficacy related beliefs can also be considered as affective factors (Smith and Ragan, as cited in Kuzgun and Deryakulu, 2004: 9). Attitudes towards learning and educational stress, dealt with in the present study, can also be considered as affective factors.

Educational stress

Stress can be defined as changes experienced due to internal and external causes. Izgar (2008) stated that these changes may lead to physical and psychological outcomes, which may vary with personality and external conditions. Considering that stress is created by problems experienced, it clearly arises from many factors such as physical, psychological, social, mental, and work related and temporary factors (Izgar, 2008, as cited in Izgar, 2015: 387-388). Naturally, academic processes may also cause stress. Attempts to adapt to the academic environment and to be successful in this environment can be considered as sources of stress. Li and Zhang (2009) listed familial pressure, high cognitive expectations, high personal expectations, anxiety about failure, exam pressure, heavy loads of courses, low mental capacity, financial problems, competitive classroom environment and other problems arising from school environment as factors affecting stress in the school atmosphere (Li and Zhang, as cited in Seçer et al., 2015: 218).

Ways of coping with sources of stress have been examined in adolescents (Sun et al., 2013), nursing students (Reeve et al., 2013), medical students (Laakkonen and Nevgi, 2014) and university students in general. Regehr et al. (2013) conducted a meta-analysis including 24 studies about sources of stress and ways to decrease stress in 1431 university students. The results of the analysis underlined the fact that universities have to initiate programs to prevent stress and to decrease stress related anxiety and depression.

Stress experienced by teachers due to their profession has also been addressed in the literature. Bowen (2016) determined three main sources of stress in language teachers in North Africa; that is, job of teaching, relationships at work and organizational issues. A qualitative and quantitative study on primary school teachers in Sakarya, Turkey, by Aydın and Kaya (2016) revealed similar results. Using a stress scale and a semi-structured interview, the researchers found that difficulties caused by school administration, the teaching profession and conditions in schools were the sources of stress.

However, school administrators, considered as a

source of stress by teachers, also complained about the forgoing sources of stress. Beusaert et al. (2016) performed four longitudinal studies between 2011 and 2014 to reveal sources of stress and burnout in 3572 administrators of primary and secondary schools in Australia. They showed that a person's surroundings could be sources of stress and that social support could reduce stress and burnout.

As emphasized in the literature above, stress can be due to personal characteristics, working conditions, insufficient resources and a person's surroundings. Considering conditions in Turkey, problems likely to appear after graduation can also be a cause of stress for the students obtaining the right to study at university after a very difficult exam, KPSS (a national exam administered in Turkey to employ individuals as state officers/teachers when they become fourth year students). Therefore, third-year students were enrolled into the present study.

Attitudes to learning

The competencies individuals achieve at the end of their learning period are related to their experiences during their learning period. One of the factors effective in this process is attitude. The term attitude is defined as intentions of individuals influencing their acceptance or rejection of the opposite (Başaran, 1990). Attitudes are acquired by means of modelling behavior of others, identification and experiences. Attitudes to learning may result from the same factors.

Since attitudes can be effective in learning as mentioned above, there have been studies about effects of attitudes on learning in various fields of study including science, mathematics, Turkish language, learning a foreign language, use of technology and acquisition of communication skills (Akamca and Hamurcu, 2005; Ünal and Ergin, 2006; Özgen and Pesen, 2008; Bosede, (2014); Yaman, 2014; Harb et al., 2014; Kovac and Zdilar, 2017; Wan and Lee, 2017). Also, there have been many studies showing that attitudes towards teaching as an occupation varied with gender, field of study, age and personality (Oral, 2004; Doğan and Çoban, 2009; Başbay et al., 2009; Bulut, 2009; Demirtaş et al., 2011; Bulut, 2011; Aslan and Yalçın, 2013; Edwards, 2014).

Sade et al. (2007), in their study on attitudes towards online learning and Pierce et al. (2007, as cited in Kara, 2010), in their study on learning mathematics through technology found that attitudes of students affected their behavior during the learning process. Positive attitudes towards learning have been reported to cause greater attempts.

Relationships between Educational Stress and Attitudes to Learning

Educational stress resembles occupational stress due to

work life. It can be affected by various factors. Relations between educational stress experienced during the learning process and various factors have been the subjects of several studies. Its relations with such factors as success, learning strategies (Laakkonen and Nevgi, 2014) and gender (Bonneville-Roussy et al., 2017) were dealt with in the literature. Yıldırım et al. (2017) examined the relations between educational stress and ways of coping with stress and self-respect, social support and general health status in 517 nursing students and found that educational stress and ways of coping with stress are significantly related to self-respect and social support and are affected by general health status.

Aktürk (2012) carried out a study using Scale for Attitudes to Learning in 200 prospective teachers to reveal the relation between attitudes to teaching and reasons for wanting to become a teacher and academic performance. The researcher found that the participants wanting to be a teacher for internal reasons were more open to learning, had higher levels of expectations from learning and had lower anxiety about learning. In addition, a significant positive relation was detected between academic performance and the subscale nature of learning in Scale for Attitudes to Learning.

Wang et al. (2015) performed a study to investigate learning pressure, learning attitudes and achievement in Macau undergraduates. Their study comprised 135 Chinese volunteers from two public universities and one private university in Macau. Out of 135 volunteers, 55 were male and 80 female, and 39 were first-year, 33 second-year, 34 third-year and 29 fourth-year undergraduates. They reported that learning pressure had a significant, moderate, and positive correlation with learning attitudes and had a negative correlation with academic achievement.

The relation between educational stress and attitudes as an emotional factor has also been the focus of interest in the literature. Izgar (2015) conducted a study on students at an education faculty (n=208) and on students taking pedagogical formation courses (n=107) to deal with both educational stress and learning attitudes. In his study, there was a significant difference in scores for attitudes to learning in favor of male students. However, there was not a significant difference in educational stress between genders. The researcher attributed this to the fact that all the students had severe stress due to KPSS regardless of gender. It seems to be important to search the relations between educational stress and various factors in order to elucidate problems experienced in education systems. Therefore, this study, using data collection tools similar to those in Izgar's study, was performed in a different sample and at a different university and time.

Aim and research questions

Cognitive, affective and psychomotor knowledge and

skills of prospective primary school teachers become important considering their effects on their occupation after graduation. These will offer education to primary school students by using the abovementioned knowledge and skills, and thus equipping the students with the knowledge their teachers have and are affected by their teachers' attitudes and stress.

The aim of the study is to examine prospective primary school teachers' attitudes towards learning and educational stress levels. The term "prospective primary school teachers" refers to the "third- and fourth-year students" included in the sample. This is the first study performed only on students studying primary education in an education faculty to determine prospective primary school teachers' attitudes to learning and educational stress levels. Prior research has not mostly focused on both attitudes to learning and educational stress. In fact, there have been only two studies about the relation between these variables, conducted by Izgar (2015) and Wang et al. (2015). Although Izgar's study used the same methodology as the current study, his study included both students in an education faculty and students not studying education but taking pedagogical courses. Wang et al.'s study comprised of first-year, second-year, third-year and fourth-year university students. The research questions of the present study are as follows:

- 1) What are the students' attitudes to learning and educational stress in general?
- 2) Is there a difference in attitudes to learning and educational stress between the female and the male students?
- 3) Is there a difference in attitudes to learning and educational stress between the third-year and the fourth-year students?
- 4) Is there a difference in attitudes to learning and educational stress between the students in the four sections they were assigned into at the beginning of the term?
- 5) Is there a relation between the students' scores for their attitudes to learning and those for their educational stress?

METHODS

The study is based on the relational model. This model deals with presence of a relation between two or more variables and its degree (Karasar, 1991: 81). In this study, the relation between students' attitudes to learning and educational stress was examined.

Sample and its characteristics

The study population included all the students in the Department Of Primary School Education at the university where the researcher worked. The reason for selection of this population was that it was easily accessible. Convenience sampling was used, and the study sample included the third-year students, who started practicum

Table 1. Characteristics of the students included into the sample (n=189).

Variables	Characteristics	N	%
Gender	Female	136	72
	Male	53	28
Year of study	Third year	108	57
	Fourth year	81	43
Sections	4A	49	26
	4B	32	17
	3A	52	27
	3B	56	30

classes, and the fourth-year students, who were getting prepared for KPSS. A total of 244 third- and fourth-year students completed the data collection tools at the end of the academic year of 2016-2017. After elimination of the measures with missing responses, data from 189 students were analyzed. The response rate was 77.46%. Table 1 presents characteristics of the students included into the sample.

As shown in Table 1, the number of the female students was higher than that of the male students. This difference was also shown in other studies performed by Hamurcu (2006, 2010) and Pamuk et al. (2014) in the same study setting at different times. It may be that teaching as a profession is more popular with females. The reasons for the high number of female students could be examined in further studies.

The sample included a total of 189 students, of whom 136 were female and 53 were male. Out of 49 students in 4A, 17 were male and 32 were female. Out of 32 students in 4B, nine were male and 23 were female. Out of 52 students in 3A, 12 were male and 40 were female. Out of 56 students in 3B, 15 were male and 41 were female.

Data collection tools

Data were collected with Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents and Scale for Attitudes to Learning. Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents was developed by Sun et al. (2011) to measure levels of stress resulting from academic factors. It is a five-point self-report Likert scale and has five subscales and 16 items. The subscale pressure from study involves four items, workload three items, worry about grades three items, self-expectation three items and despondency three items. The scale was translated into Turkish and its validity and reliability for the Turkish population were tested by Akin et al. (2012). Construct validity of the scale was tested on 300 university students. According to the explanatory factor analysis made after achievement of the construct validity, Kaiser Meier Olkin value was 0.81 and the Bartlett's Sphericity test result was as follows: χ^2 : 3488.103. Sixteen items and five subscales explained 83% of the total variance. The internal consistency analysis made to determine the reliability of the scale showed that Cronbach's alpha was 0.86 for the scale and 0.87 for pressure from study, 0.93 for workload, 0.90 for worry about grades, 0.90 for self-expectation and 0.91 for despondency (Akin et al., 2012). Cronbach's alpha was 0.77 for the scale in the present study. Scale for Attitudes to Learning was developed and its validity and reliability were tested by Kara (2010). It is a five-point Likert scale

and has four subscales and 40 items. The subscale nature of learning involves seven items, expectation nine items, openness eleven items and anxiety thirteen items. The scale is composed of 29 positive items and eleven negative items. The construct validity of the scale was tested on 285 university students. According to the factor analysis for repeated measures, Kaiser Meier Olkin value was 0.79 and Bartlett's Sphericity value was as in the following: χ^2 : 3101,363. The internal consistency analysis, made to test the reliability of the scale, showed that Cronbach's alpha was 0.73 for the scale, 0.77 for nature of learning, 0.72 for expectations, 0.78 for openness and 0.81 for anxiety (Kara, 2010). Cronbach's alpha was 0.68 for the scale in the present study.

Analysis of data

Data obtained were analyzed with Statistical Package Program for Social Sciences for WINDOWS 17.0. Frequency, mean, standard deviation, mode and median were utilized for analysis of the data. Since the data did not have a normal distribution, the non-parametric tests, Kruskal Wallis, Mann-Whitney U test and Chi-square test and Pearson correlation analysis were employed for comparisons. $p < 0.05$ was accepted as significant.

RESULTS

Obtained results are dealt with and discussed in accordance with the research problems. To deal with the first research question "What are the students' attitudes towards learning and educational stress", the data are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 shows mean scores for subscales of the scales. Since the data collection tools are five-point Likert scales, they have four ranges and each range corresponds to the score of 0.80. Depending on the number of the items in the subscales, ranges can be calculated.

The lowest and the highest scores for Scale for Attitudes to Learning are 40 and 200 respectively. The students got the mean score for the scale was 151.21, corresponding to "mostly agree". They had a positive attitude to learning in terms of the nature of learning,

Table 2. Descriptive characteristics of data from Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents and Scale for Attitudes to Learning (n=189).

Scale	Subscales	Mean	Median	Standard deviation	Mode	Range
Scale for Attitudes to Learning	Nature of learning	31.11	32.00	3.49	22.0	13.0-35.0
	Expectation	39.69	40.00	4.41	25.0	20.0-45.0
	Openness	44.97	46.00	5.76	28.0	27.0-55.0
	Anxiety	35.42	36.00	7.79	38.0	13.0-51.0
	Total	151.21	152.00	9.45	75.0	100.0-175.0
Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents	Pressure for study	11.34	11.00	3.33	16.0	4.0-20.0
	Workload	9.37	9.00	2.49	12.0	3.0-15.0
	Worry about grades	8.87	9.00	2.84	12.0	3.0-15.0
	Self-expectation	10.7	11.00	2.52	11.0	4.0-15.0
	Despondency	8.74	8.000	2.61	12.0	3.0-15.0
	Total	49.14	48.00	9.17	50.0	24.0-74.0

expectations from learning, openness to learning and anxiety.

The highest and the lowest scores for Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents are 16 and 80 respectively. Higher scores for the scale indicate severe educational stress (Akin, 2012: 105). In the present study, the students got the mean score of 49.14 for the scale, which corresponds to indecisiveness. However, they got 10.7, a high score for the subscale self-expectation.

The second research question of the present study was whether the students' attitudes to learning and educational stress differed in terms of their gender. Table 3 presents a comparison of the scores for attitudes to learning and educational stress between genders according to the analysis with Mann-Whitney U test.

As shown in Table 3, there was a significant difference in scores for attitudes to learning in general and the subscale expectation between genders ($p < 0.05$). Similarly, the difference in scores for the subscales of educational stress, pressure from study and self-expectation between the genders was significant ($p < 0.05$).

The third research question of this study was whether there was a significant difference in attitudes towards learning and educational stress in terms of the year of study. According to the analysis with Mann-Whitney U test, the differences between the third-year and the fourth-year students in attitudes to learning and educational stress are shown in Table 4.

As presented in Table 4, there was not a significant difference in attitudes to learning between the third-year students and the fourth-year students. However, concerning with educational stress, there was a significant difference in self-expectations between the third-year and the fourth-year students $p < 0.05$. This difference resulted from the higher scores of the fourth-year students for self-expectations.

The fourth research question of the present study was whether the students differed in their attitudes to learning

and educational stress in terms of their sections. The students were receiving education in four different sections. They were assigned into these sections according to the last digit of the numbers in their student IDs at the beginning of the term. Kruskal Wallis-H test was performed to reveal possible differences. Table 5 shows the mean rank scores of the students in four sections and Table 6 reveals a comparison of the mean rank scores between the four sections; that is, 4A, 4B, 3A and 3B.

As shown in Table 5, there were small intragroup and intergroup differences in the mean rank scores for attitudes to learning and educational stress. To determine whether these differences were significant, Kruskal-Wallis analysis was performed. Chi-square and p values obtained through this analysis are shown in Table 6.

As seen in Table 6, no significant difference was found between the sections in terms of attitudes to learning and educational stress. The small differences shown in Table 5 were found to be insignificant. The students receiving education in four sections did not differ in their attitudes to learning and educational stress they experienced.

The fifth research question was whether there was a relation between the scores for attitudes to learning and those for educational stress. Pearson correlation analysis was made to determine the presence of this difference and the results of the analysis are presented in Table 7.

As demonstrated in Table 7, significant relations were detected between several subscales of Scale for Attitudes to Learning and those of Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents. The correlation coefficients 0.70-1.00 indicate a strong correlation, 0.70-0.30 a moderate correlation and 0.30-0.00 a weak correlation. Negative correlation coefficients show an inverse relation (Büyüköztürk, 2002: 31-32). Accordingly, as shown in Table 7, the following results were obtained:

No significant relation was found between the total scores for Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents and those

Table 3. Comparison of scores for Attitudes to Learning and Educational Stress between genders.

Scales	Subscales	Gender (n)	Mean rank	Sum rank	Mann-Whitney U test	P
Scale for Attitudes to Learning	Nature of learning	Female: 136	97.33	13236.50	3287.50	0.345
		Male: 53	89.03	4718.50		
	Expectation	Female: 136	103.89	14129.00	2395.00	0.000*
		Male: 53	72.19	3826.00		
	Openness	Female: 136	98.15	13348.00	3176.00	0.204
Male: 53		86.92	4607.00			
Anxiety	Female: 136	98.40	13382.00	3142.00	0.171	
	Male: 53	86.28	4573.00			
Total	Female: 136	105.82	14392.00	2132.00	0.000*	
	Male: 53	67.23	3563.00			
Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents	Pressure from study	Female: 136	100.03	13603.50	2920.50	0.042*
		Male: 53	82.10	4351.50		
	Workload	Female: 136	95.51	12989.00	3535.00	0.837
		Male: 53	93.70	4966.00		
	Worry about grades	Female: 136	96.44	13116.50	3407.50	0.558
		Male: 53	91.29	4838.50		
Self-expectation	Female: 136	103.82	14119.50	2404.50	0.000*	
	Male: 53	72.37	3835.50			
Despondency	Female: 136	95.67	13010.50	3513.50	0.787	
	Male: 53	93.29	4944.50			
Total	Female: 136	100.07	13609.50	2914.50	0.041*	
	Male: 53	81.99	4345.50			

*p<0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Table 4. Comparison of Attitudes to Learning and Educational Stress between Third-Year and Fourth-Year Students.

Scales	Subscales	Year of Study (n)	Mean rank	Sum rank	Mann-Whitney U test	P
Scale for Attitudes to Learning	Nature of learning	Third year: 108	98.27	10613.50	4020.50	0.339
		Fourth year: 81	90.64	7341.50		
	Expectation	Third year: 108	94.75	10233.50	4347.50	0.943
		Fourth year: 81	95.33	7721.50		
	Openness	Third year: 108	93.98	10149.50	4263.50	0.766
Fourth year: 81		96.36	7805.50			
Anxiety	Third year: 108	96.20	10389.50	4263.50	0.766	
	Fourth year: 81	93.40	7565.50			
Total	Third year: 108	94.54	10210.50	4324.50	0.894	
	Fourth year: 81	95.61	7744.50			
Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents	Pressure from study	Third year: 108	91.14	9843.00	3957.00	0.260
		Fourth year: 81	100.15	8112.00		
	Workload	Third year: 108	95.53	10317.00	4317.00	0.877
		Fourth year: 81	94.30	7638.00		
	Worry about Grades	Third year: 108	89.81	9700.00	3814.00	0.130
Fourth year: 81		101.91	8255.00			
Self-expectation	Third year: 108	88.04	9508.00	3622.00	0.042*	
	Fourth year: 81	104.28	8447.00			

Table 4. Contd.

Despondency	Third year: 108	95.37	10300.00	4334.00	0.914
	Fourth year: 81	94.51	7655.00		
Total	Third year: 108	91.03	9831.50	3945.50	0.249
	Fourth year: 81	100.29	8123.50		

* $p < 0.05$ was considered significant.

Table 5. Distribution of mean rank scores for Attitudes to Learning and Educational Stress in four sections.

Scale for Attitudes to Learning	Sections (n)	Mean Rank	Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents	Mean Rank
Nature of learning	1:49	91.41	Pressure from Study	107.18
	2:32	89.45		89.38
	3:52	94.91		95.63
	4:56	101.39		86.97
Expectation	1:49	95.40	Workload	95.52
	2:32	95.22		92.42
	3:52	87.88		104.67
	4:56	101.14		87.04
Openness	1:49	94.56	Worry about Grades	106.73
	2:32	99.13		94.53
	3:52	86.77		93.58
	4:56	100.67		86.32
Anxiety	1:49	102.50	Self-Expectation	101.80
	2:32	79.47		108.09
	3:52	99.42		86.39
	4:56	93.21		89.56
Total	1:49		Despondency	99.27
	2:32			87.22
	3:52			93.92
	4:56			96.71
Total	1:49	102.28	Total	103.95
	2:32	85.41		94.69
	3:52	88.54		95.13
	4:56	100.12		87.22

for Scale for Attitudes to Learning ($r = 0.363$; $p = 0.392$). However, there was a significant relation between the scores for Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents and those for the subscales of Scale for Attitudes to Learning and between the scores for Scale for Attitudes to Learning and the scores for the subscales of Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents.

There was a significant, positive weak relation between the score for the subscale self-expectation in Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents and the score for Scale for Attitudes to Learning ($r = 0.166$; $p = 0.023$).

A significant, positive weak relation was also found between the score for the subscale despondency in

Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents and the score for Scale for Attitudes to Learning ($r = 0.148$; $p = 0.043$).

No significant relation was found between the score for the subscale nature of learning in Scale for Attitudes to Learning and the score for Educational Stress for Adolescents.

A significant relation was found between the score for the subscale expectation in Scale for Attitudes to Learning and the score for Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents and its three subscales. There was a moderate negative correlation between expectation and educational stress in general ($r = -0.229$; $p = 0.002$), pressure from study ($r = -0.222$; $p = 0.002$), workload ($r = -$

Table 6. Comparison of mean rank scores for Attitudes to Learning and Educational Stress between the sections.

Scale for Attitudes to Learning	Results of Kruskal-Wallis analysis *	Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents	Results of Kruskal-Wallis analysis*
Nature of learning	Chi-square: 1.32 p: .723	Pressure from study	Chi-square: 4.02 p: .259
Expectation	Chi-square: 1.60 p: .658	Workload	Chi-square: 2.93 p: .401
Openness	Chi-square: 1.97 p: .579	Worry about grades	Chi-square: 3.74 p: .290
Anxiety	Chi-square: 3.90 p: .271	Self-expectation	Chi-square: 4.50 p: .212
		Despondency	Chi-square: 1.03 p: .793
Total	Chi-square: 3.07 p: .381	Total	Chi-square: 2.44 p: .485

* Since $p > 0.05$ for the degrees of freedom 3, there was not a significant difference between the sections.

Table 7. Results of the correlation analysis for the Relation between Attitudes to Learning and Educational Stress.

Subscales	AG	NL	E	O	A	SG	PS	WL	WG	SE	D
Pearson p n AG	1 189										
Pearson p n NL	0.520 0.000* 189	1 189									
Pearson p n E	0.701 0.000* 189	0.298 0.000 189	1 189								
Pearson p n O	0.444 0.000* 189	0.144 0.048* 189	0.644 0.000* 189	1 189							
Pearson p n SG	0.254 0.000* 189	-0.093 0.205 189	-0.326 0.000* 189	-0.631 0.000* 189	1 189						
Pearson p n PS	0.063 0.392 189	-0.005 0.947 189	-0.229 0.002* 189	-0.352 0.000* 189	0.468 0.000* 189	1 189					
Pearson p n WL	0.005 0.947 189	-0.080 0.275 189	-0.222 0.002* 189	-0.324 0.000* 189	0.407 0.000* 189	0.814 0.000* 189	1 189				
Pearson	-0.087	-0.095	-0.201	-0.266	0.248	0.575	0.450	1			

Table 7. Contd.

p		0.232	0.192	0.005*	0.000*	0.001*	0.000*	0.000*				
n	WG	189	189	189	189	189	189	189	189	189		
Pearson		-0.010	0.016	-0.097	-0.118	0.123	0.589	0.307	0.118	1		
p		0.892	0.823	0.183	0.104	0.091	0.000*	0.000*	0.106			
n	NK	189	189	189	189	189	189	189	189	189		
Pearson		0.166	0.077	0.009	-0.111	0.243	0.687	0.402	0.203	0.366	1	
p		0.023*	0.294	0.905	0.129	0.001*	0.000*	0.000*	0.005*	0.000*		
n	SE	189	189	189	189	189	189	189	189	189	189	
Pearson		0.148	0.084	-0.229	-0.334	0.518	0.617	0.431	0.167	0.119	0.339	1
p		0.043*	0.253	0.002*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.022*	0.104	0.000*	
n	D	189	189	189	189	189	189	189	189	189	189	189

* $p < 0.05$ was considered significant. AG: Attitudes to learning in general; NL: nature of learning E: Expectation, O: Openness; A: Anxiety; EG: Educational stress in general; PS: Pressure from Study; WL: Workload; WG: Worry about grades; SE: Self-expectation; D: Despondency.

0.201; $p = 0.005$) and despondency ($r = -0.229$; $p = 0.002$).

A significant relation was detected between the score for the subscale openness in Scale for Attitudes to Learning and the scores for Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents and its three subscales. A negative moderate relation was found between the score for openness and the scores for Educational Stress Scale ($r = -0.352$; $p = 0.000$) and its subscales pressure from study ($r = -0.324$; $p = 0.000$) and despondency ($r = -0.334$; $p = 0.000$). A negative weak relation was detected between the score for openness and the score for the subscale workload ($r = -0.266$; $p = 0.000$).

There was a significant positive relation between the score for the subscale anxiety about learning in Scale for Attitudes to Learning and the scores for Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents ($r = 0.468$; $p = 0.000$) and its four subscales. Anxiety had a significant moderate relation with pressure from study ($r = 0.407$; $p = 0.000$) and despondency ($r = 0.518$; $p = 0.000$) and a significant, weak relation with workload ($r = 0.248$; $p = 0.001$) and self-expectation ($r = 0.243$; $p = 0.001$).

DISCUSSION

In the present study, the students were found to have a positive attitude towards learning. In contrast with this finding, Izgar (2015: 393) reported that the students got lower scores for their attitudes to learning. In Izgar's study, the mean score was 91.30 in the students at the Education Faculty and 87.49 in the students taking Pedagogical Formation courses, with a significant difference ($p < 0.05$). The researcher ascribed this difference with the idea that the students at the Education Faculty were more enthusiastic with becoming a teacher.

In the current study, the students received low scores for educational stress; however, they agreed that self-expectations created educational stress. It can be suggested that they did not have high levels of educational stress, compatible with the results reported by Izgar (2015: 393). In Izgar's study, the students at the Educational Faculty had a mean score of 48.8.

Causes of stress have not been elucidated completely and have been classified differently in the literature. Gupta (1981) categorized them into environmental, organizational and personal factors (Gupta, 1981, as cited in Buluş, 1999: 67). Izgar (2008) identified six factors as stated in Introduction; that is, physical, psychological, social, mental, and work related and temporary factors (Izgar, 2008, as cited in Izgar, 2015: 387-388). The reason for the changes in classification of these causes is that stress is created by interplay of numerous factors. Gender is one of these factors. While some studies did not show a relation between gender and stress (Chan, 2002; Cam, 2004; Durna, 2006; Erdoğan et al., 2009; Izgar, 2015), others revealed a significant relation between them (Aysan, 1998; Sökmen, 2005). These conflicting findings might be due to differences in setting and time of studies, characteristics of samples and multiplicity of factors causing stress.

In the present study, the female students got significantly higher scores for expectations from learning, pressure from study and self-expectations. This suggested that the female students had a higher level of educational stress due to their expectations from learning, pressure from study and self-expectations. However, Durna (2006: 374) in a study on 378 university students did not find a significant difference in stress severities between male and female students. In addition, Izgar (2015: 393) did not show a significant difference in

educational stress between the male and the female students ($t=-0.36$; $p=0.72$; $p>0.05$). The researcher attributed this to the fact that both male and female students were getting prepared for KPSS, which would take place soon.

Although several studies showed that gender did not have a significant influence on attitudes to learning (Saracaloğlu, 2000), other studies revealed a significant difference between genders (Izgar, 2015; Wan and Lee, 2017). The present study revealed that the female students had higher self-expectations. It may be that they were more willing and assiduous to receive education and have an occupation. In contrast with the finding in the present study, Izgar (2015: 392), in his study on 182 female students and 133 male students found a significant difference in attitudes to learning in favor of the male students ($t=-2.03$; $p=0.04$; $p<0.05$). The researcher suggested that the male students were more willing to learn. The conflict between the current study and Izgar's study might have been due to differences in stress related factors. Like Izgar, Wan and Lee (2017) showed that male students had significantly more favorable attitudes to science in terms of the subscales self-concept in science, enjoyment in science, learning in and outside the classroom and future participation.

The year of study did not have a significant influence on attitudes to learning. This indicates that the year of study was not predictive of attitudes to learning. However, it had a significant influence on expectations. In fact, the fourth-year students had higher expectations about their academic success and their life in the future. Therefore, they experienced more severe educational stress. Considering that the subscale self-expectation has items about hopes for the future, the finding is indicative of their stress and anxiety about their life in the future.

In the current study, self-expectations and despondency had a positive weak relation with attitudes to learning. This suggests that self-expectations and despondency slightly affect attitudes to learning. The nature of learning had no significant relation with educational stress. This indicates that it did not produce educational stress.

Educational stress in general, pressure from study, workload and despondency had moderate, negative correlations with expectation. This finding is suggestive of a moderate, negative effect of educational stress in general, pressure from study, workload and despondency on expectations related attitudes.

Educational stress in general, pressure from study and despondency had a significant negative moderate relation with openness. These findings are suggestive of a moderate effect of educational stress in general and its subscales pressure from study and despondency. Workload had a significant negative weak correlation with openness. This suggests presence of a mild influence of workload on openness related attitudes to learning.

The relation between educational stress and anxiety related to attitudes to learning was significantly positive. This finding shows presence of a linear relationship between anxiety about learning and educational stress and that as one increases so does the other (Büyüköztürk, 2002: 32). It can be suggested that anxiety is influenced by some aspects of educational stress.

In Izgar (2015: 394) study, the score for Scale for Attitudes to Learning had a significant negative weak relation with the scores for the subscales worry about grades ($r=-0.16$) and self-expectation ($r=-0.23$, $p<0.01$) in Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents. It means that as the scores for worry about grades and self-expectation increased, the scores for attitudes to learning decreased, which conflicts with the results of the present study. The conflict between the findings in Izgar's study and those of the present study might have resulted from the differences between the samples. Especially, inclusion of the students taking pedagogical courses in Izgar's study might have had an impact on the difference. In fact, as emphasized before, significant differences were found between the students in the education faculty and those taking pedagogical courses in terms of attitudes to learning and educational stress. This might have an influence on the correlation analysis of the scores for both scales.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study, directed towards revealing relations between attitudes to learning and educational stress, show that although the students' attitudes to learning varied with subscales of educational stress, the students either mostly agreed or were indecisive about their attitudes and stress. Their low scores for educational stress indicate that they had low levels of stress. Since high levels of stress can be effective in academic performance, their low scores for educational stress seem to be favorable. The comparisons between genders revealed differences in attitudes to learning and educational stress and their subscales in favor of the female students. Although the year of study did not create a difference in attitudes to learning, the fourth-year students had a higher self-expectation. The sections of the students did not cause a difference. Attitudes to learning were associated with some aspects of educational stress.

In light of the results of this study, the following recommendations can be made:

- 1) The study was performed on a small sample of the students in a single Education Faculty. Therefore, further studies should be conducted in larger samples.
- 2) Data were collected only through quantitative research tools like scales. It can be recommended that qualitative data be gathered with such tools as interviews and focus

group interviews.

3) Detection of relations between attitudes to learning and educational stress can provide guidance for arrangement of the learning environment. Taking account of effects of attitudes on academic success, appropriate interventions directed towards minimization of worries about grades and workload and supporting expectations should be offered to reduce academic stress of students. The units and specialists responsible for reduction of educational stress in students at universities could be appointed to conduct these interventions.

4) Stress and anxiety can affect academic performance. This may prevent students from receiving sufficient scores to pass KPSS in Turkey, required to get a job in state organizations. Therefore, the Turkish Ministry of Health and other policy makers should pay attention to the relation between academic performance and stress and anxiety. The results of the present study can help them be aware of the problems experienced by prospective primary school teachers, take appropriate precautions and provide appropriate support for these prospective teachers.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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Appendix A

ÖĞRENMEYE İLİŞKİN TUTUM VE STRES ÖLÇEKLERİ

Açıklama: Aşağıda öğrenmeye ilişkin çeşitli ifadeler verilmiştir. Söz konusu ifadeye hangi oranda katılıyorsanız, lütfen karşısındaki ilgili sütunu "X" ile işaretleyiniz. Bu araştırma tamamen bilimsel amaç taşımaktadır, vereceğiniz samimi ve eksiksiz cevaplardan dolayı teşekkür ederim. Yrd. Doç. Dr. HÜLYA HAMURCU

Cinsiyetiniz: Kadın..... Erkek.....
Sınıf: 3. Sınıf..... 4. Sınıf.....

Öğrenmeye ilişkin tutum	Katılıyorum	Kısmen Katılıyorum	Fikrim Yok	Katılmıyorum	Hiç Katılmıyorum
1-Zeki olanlar daha rahat öğrenirler					
2- Öğrendiklerimi çabuk unutmam beni tedirgin ediyor					
3- Yeni konular öğrendikçe düşüncelerim farklılaşmaktadır					
4- Çalışmayı sevmediğimden öğrenmek istemiyorum					
5- Öğrenme ömür boyu devam eder					
6- Öğrenmek zor iştir, yeni şeyler öğrenirken zorlanıyorum					
7- Öğrendiklerim hayata bakış açımı değiştiriyor					
8- Zorunlu değilse, öğrenmek istemem					
9- Öğrenmede zeka önemlidir					
10- Öğrenirken çok zaman kaybetmem beni olumsuz etkilemektedir					
11- Şimdiye kadar çok şey öğrendim ama faydasını hiç görmedim					
12- Zor olan konuları öğrenmek bana zevk veriyor					
13- Ne öğrenirsem 30 yaşına kadar öğrenirim					
14- Yeni konular anlatılırken rahatsızlık duyuyorum					
15- Hayatta karşılaşılan problemlerle ilgili etkili ve doğru karar verebilmek için sürekli öğrenmek gerekir					
16- Yeni bir konuyu öğrenirken zorlanmıyorum					
17- Öğrenme ölüme kadar devam eden bir süreçtir					
18- Yeni konular öğrenirken konsantrasyon sorunu yaşarım					
19- Yeni şeyler öğrenerek insanlarla iletişimi geliştirmek istiyorum					
20- Sürekli yeni şeyler öğrenmekten yoruldum					
21- Her insanın öğrenme kapasitesi farklıdır					
22- Dikkatimi yoğunlaştıramamam beni rahatsız ediyor					
23- Yeni şeyler öğrenmek yaptığım işlerde başarılı olmamı sağlıyor					
24- Öğrenmeye açık bir insan değilim					
25- Zeki olanlar daha iyi öğrenirler					
26- Yeni konular anlatıldığında canım sıkılır					
27- Öğrendikçe yanlış kararlarımın sayısı azalmaktadır					
28- Şu an sahip olduğum bilgiler benim için yeterlidir					
29- Öğrenmek hep ilgimi çekmiştir					
30- Yeni şeyler öğrenmek işimle ilgili motivasyonumu artırıyor					
31- Daha öğreneceğim çok şey var					
32- Yeni bir konuyu öğrenmeye çalışmak keyiflidir					
33- Öğrendikçe hedeflerim büyüyor					
34- Deneyimlerimden ders almayı bilirim					
35- Yeni konulara başlarken tedirgin olurum					
36- Her türlü konuyu rahatça öğrenebilirim					
37- Yeni konular öğrenmek hoşuma gidiyor					
38- Öğrenmeye karşı tedirgin değilim					
39- Yeni konular öğrenirken başım ağrır					
40- Yeni şeyler öğrenmeye sürekli hazırım					

Appendix B

Eđitim stresi ölçeđi						
Her sorunun karşısında bulunan; (1) Hiç Katılmıyorum (2) Katılmıyorum (3) Kararsızım (4) Katılıyorum ve (5) Tamamen Katılıyorum anlamına gelmektedir. Lütfen her ifadeye mutlaka TEK yanıt veriniz ve kesinlikle BOŞ bırakmayınız. En uygun yanıtları vereceđinizi ümit eder katkılarınız için teşekkür ederim.						
1	Derslerden aldığım notlarımdan hiç memnun değilim.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Okulda çok fazla yapılacak işim olduğunu hissediyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Çok fazla ev ödevim var.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Gelecekteki eğitim ve çalışma yaşantımı düşündüğümde akademik açıdan yoğun baskı hissediyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Ebeveynim ders notlarımla çok fazla ilgileniyor ve bu benim baskı hissetmeme yol açıyor.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Günlük derslerimden ve akademik çalışmalarımın dolaylı yoğun baskı altına giriyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Okulda çok fazla sınav olduğunu düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Derslerden aldığım notlar geleceğim için çok önemlidir hatta bütün yaşamımı etkileyebilir.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Sınavlardan düşük not aldığımında ebeveynimi hayal kırıklığına uğrattığımı düşünürüm.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Sınavlardan düşük not aldığımında öğretmenimi hayal kırıklığına uğrattığımı düşünürüm.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Sınıf arkadaşlarım arasında yoğun bir rekabet var ve bu akademik açıdan baskı hissetmeme yol açıyor.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Çođunlukla derslerden alacağım notlar konusunda kendime güvenemem.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Derslerde dikkatimi toplamakta çok güçlük yaşıyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Kendim için belirlediğim akademik standartlara ulaşamadığımda kendimi gergin hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Beklentilerimi karşılayamadığım durumlarda yeteri kadar iyi olamadığımı hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Amaçlarıma ulaşamayacağımı düşündüğümde yoğun biçimde endişelenirim ve çođunlukla uyuyamam.	1	2	3	4	5

Not: Sevgili öğrencilerim bu bölüme, Sınıf öğretmenliği bölümünü/ mesleđini seçmenizle ilgili görüşlerinizi yazabilirsiniz... Ayrıca derslerle, gelecekteki akademik beklentilerle ilgili de düşüncelerinizi öğrenmek isterim.

Buraya yazacaklarınız sadece akademik/ bilimsel ve etik kurallara uygun olarak kullanılacaktır.

Görüşlerim;